

SHARPER PLANT PORTRAITS

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I'm sure most of us who try to capture close-up plant portraits find that sometimes our camera has other ideas. Small or narrow subjects are difficult to focus on and we wind up with the wrong part of the plant in focus, or sometimes with a sharply-focused background and a blurred subject. However, there are a couple of easy solutions to getting that elusive flower into focus.

There are two methods that I use to trick the camera if it is not cooperating. To take a very close shot, I place my fingers into the scene at the same distance from the lens as the subject flower. I then focus on my fingers (pressing the shutter halfway down) and then - still holding shutter button half-down - move my fingers out of the shot, centre the subject, and press the shutter button fully for a focused shot of the bloom.



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Focus on your fingers, half-press the shutter, then remove fingers and press the shutter down to take the photograph



Use a plant label at the same distance as the subject to provide a flat plane upon which to focus

I also carry with me a good-sized plant label with writing on it, which I can push into the ground near the subject (again, positioned at the same distance from the camera as the subject). I simply take my reading from the label, ensuring the lettering is sharply focused, then move the camera over to the subject flower and take the photo.

With a little practice using these two techniques, your close-up photographs should be perfect!